

**REMARKS**

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application in view of the following remarks. Claims 1-97 are currently pending in this application. No amendments are made herein.

In the Office Action, the Examiner points out that certain foreign publications submitted in an Information Disclosure Statement filed December 19, 2005 do not contain statements of relevancy in accordance with M.P.E.P. § 609. The Examiner further notes that in order for these foreign patents to be considered, a statement of relevancy must be included, or, if the Applicants do not have, or cannot readily obtain, an item of required information, a statement that the item is unknown or cannot be readily obtained may be accepted as a complete reply to the requirement for that item.

Accordingly, Applicants have carefully reviewed the Information Disclosure Statement submitted December 19, 2005, and the foreign publications listed therein. Of the foreign publications submitted, only three, EP 0 297 258, EP 0 993 029, and DE 198 41 430, were not submitted in the English language. With respect to EP 0 297 258, Applicants hereby submit, on a supplemental Information Disclosure Statement, a further copy of EP 0 297 258 with an attached English translation of the Abstract, as well as a copy of U.S. Patent No. 4,881,589, which corresponds to EP 0 297 258. With respect to DE 198 41 430 and EP 0 993 029, Applicants hereby submit, on the Information Disclosure Statement, additional copies of each of these documents, along with English translations of their abstracts.

Accordingly, Applicants believe the requirements of M.P.E.P. § 609 have been satisfied, and that the relevancy of each of foreign publications DE 198 41 430, EP 0 993 029, and EP 0 297 258 is clear based on the documents submitted herewith on the Information Disclosure Statement. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner consider these documents and return an initialed copy of the enclosed Form 1449 to Applicants' undersigned representative with the next correspondence.

The present application is now believed to be in condition for allowance, should the Examiner find some issue to remain unresolved, or should any new issues arise which could be eliminated through discussions with Applicants' representative, then the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone in order that the further prosecution of this application can thereby be expedited.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees connected with this filing which may be required now, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-2380.

Respectfully submitted,



Stephen M. Hertzler  
Registration No. 58,247

Dated: May 9, 2006

**Customer No. 22204**  
NIXON PEABODY LLP  
Suite 900  
401 9th Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20004-2128  
Telephone: (202) 585-8000